In the case of gonorrhea, the infected woman can demand damages only if she notices the misfortune before she has been paid for the favor rendered. The damages amount to 400 spears if the disease came from a person of the same kin group, and 1000 spears if it came from a person of another kin group. With the payment the "temporary marriage contract" is terminated, and thereby any claim for damages is nullified. In other words, it is always a good idea to pay one's debts as soon as possible: :

[539] a bĕle, a bĕle, a kŏn abĕ mayŏk.
Keeping, keeping, it strikes (a) poor bargain.

The person who always keeps his money to himself runs into an unfavorable price situation.

Their unrestrained sexual intercourse has a highly deleterious effect upon the Negroes; it weakens and stupefies them. Smaller boys are often quite useful as servants, but once they reach sexual maturity and become acquainted with women, they can simply no longer be used. The Pangwe recognize this bad influence, and intelligent ones among them did not hesitate to confess frankly to me that their sexual practices corrupted them and made them incapable of strenuous physical or intellectual work. We do not need the testimony of individuals, however -- popular customs demonstrate this insight sufficiently. I believe that, aside from [834] being based upon the original religious conception concerning the sinfulness of sexual intercourse and its incarnation in the woman, the abstinence rules for war and hunting expeditions and for iron smelting are based on the experience that sexual intercourse weakens the man's physical and intellectual capacities. Naturally, the man is inclined to heap the blame on women /268/ [196] and bebŏn, "vaginas," as he contemptuously calls them (1).

1. "Terms which originally only signified 'vulva' or 'cunnus' but were then generalized into the concept 'wenches,'" exist everywhere in Europe, too; see Anthropophyteia, Jahrbücher für folkloristische Erhebungen und Forschungen zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der geschlechtlichen

839 [824] In the case of members of the female sex, masturbation by means of a plantain fruit is widespread, something which is to be foreseen in view of the bad situations arising from polygyny. A proverb states:

[539] o kūe ma zā (sā[k]) ebôn onū́,
you find me satisfying vagina (with the) finger (1)

1. Probably a circumlocution since one did not want to mention the real object. Moreover, in coastal English the clusters of fruit growing alternately in a "plantain bunch," are called a "plantain hand," and the individual fruits making up the hand are called "fingers."

[196]

oa bɛ́le nkŭn,
you have (the) penis,

and this is used whenever someone does not part with something of which he has a superabundance, even when he sees that another person is short of it and makes shift with a poor substitute.

838 We have spoken above of homosexual relations among "children." In adults such conduct is regarded as something immoral and unnatural, simply as unheard of. In reality, however, it is frequently "heard of" that young people carry on homosexual relations with each other and even of older people who take boys -- who, as is well known, "have neither understanding nor shame" -- and readily console them by saying: "bia bŏ pfiă"ga (we are having fun, playing a game, joking)." The children are excused with the well-known assertion, which in its deeper sense can rarely be defended: bŏ ne bɔ̌"ngo = they are ignorant, that is, they know not what they do. Adults are excused with the corresponding assertion: a bɛ́le nnɛ́m e bɔ̌"ngo = he has (the) heart (that is, the aspirations) of boys, which is, of course, by no means flattering to them.

Publicly, of course, homosexuals are treated with the greatest contempt, and they were therefore forced, as a matter of course,

621 all future progress to the extent to which it allows (or does not allow)
571 the maintenance of sufficiently large and stable village units.
614

Political Authority and Judicial Authority

554 Taking Fang society as an example, Dr. Cureau speaks of
622 "a phenomenon of a stretching ... of the social bloc into a hierarchy based either on filiation or on intellectual and particularly moral superiority, both of which principles have their practical value according to the times." (1) He insists on a fact we have

1. Work already quoted, p. 332.

pointed out, the lack of a hierarchical organization, [with only] the simple existence of pre-eminences. The language itself gives [196] proof of this fact by not having a special word to designate the chief, using ésa when the pre-eminence is in a way genealogical, nkuma when it is based on wealth, ẙoé (from ẙu, to say) when it justified by eloquence and the ability to command. By magnifying this statement, A. Cureau contrasts the Fang groupings with those of other peoples as being "anarchical tribes" as opposed to "organized tribes." He writes: "Authority is occasional and momentary ... Edvoughe has carried the votes in such-and-such a difficult palaver, the whole assembly obeys for a moment this ephemeral chief; tomorrow Nzokh will have succeeded Edvoughe in the leadership of opinion; here then the struggle against one and all takes place between constantly changing and constantly renewed contestants." (2)

2. Ibid., p. 326.

In a similar sense the informants of the Commission for [137] Historical Investigation assert that the chief was "in a word the one from whom the community expected the greatest services." (1)

1. Official report of the fifth session.

In the same vein there are continual complaints from administrators incapable of reviving the powerful traditional chefferies and of acting through their medium.

137 The humidity promotes vigorous forest vegetation throughout almost the whole area under consideration: on the plateau, primary forest (afan) giving way to secondary forest of softwood and dense undergrowth (ékɔ̂tɔ̂k) (2); in the valley of the Ogooué there is swamp forest

[31]
196

2. In my view ékwotola or ékotok clearly denote secondary forest but of the brushwood variety, and, if I understand correctly, ékotok is used to describe fallow, land that has been cultivated and that is still more or less in use.

Secondary forest would be called afan, in which the nuance of cleared forest is lost.

Primary forest would be called mfun afan. (J.B.)

at Poto-poto /2/ and mangrove in the estuary. Only north of Yaoundé, in Beti country, is there park-savanna with gallery forest along the
134 tributaries of the Sanaga. Black earth with thick humus (évindisi) is found in the valley bottoms, with red earth in process of rapid lateritization (évelesi) predominating, especially in the north.

135 The minerals are: a medium grade of lateritic iron, which is fairly common; rutile /an ore of titanium/; a little placer gold; perhaps a little copper.

136 Wild fauna is still quite abundant in the less populated regions and is extremely varied. There are anthropoids (gorilla, chimpanzee, and perhaps a third species, ébɔ̂t, not described by French writers but listed by Du Chaillu and by certain German zoologists); elephant; hippopotamus (becoming extinct); manatee (nearly extinct); buffalo; many kinds of antelope, among which the great Cephalophus (sɔ̂) plays an important role in social and religious life; flying squirrels; earth hog; pangolins; river hog and forest pig; rock badger in the south; panthers; tiger cats; civet cat; otter, and parpassa /?/; various reptiles, among them python, Dendraspis, Bitis gabonica, and cobra; numerous diurnal and nocturnal birds of prey; touraco, toucan; Buceros; francolin; grey parrot; giant snail and fresh-water bivalves; fresh-water crabs and prawns; abundant siluroids; crocodiles; various insects, among them the goliath beetle, etc.

164 There are many parasites and insect vectors: dysenteric amoeba;
136 ankylostoma; microfilaria; plasmodia; Trypanosoma (especially in the east); jigger flea; forest ticks and leeches are rather uncommon.